

LEFT: Curious dot formation (see arrow) as it appears on NASA satellite photo — scale 150,000:1. RIGHT, OPPOSITE PAGE: Blow-up of this formation. Length of enclosing oval formation 3 kms. BELOW: Photo of petroglyph, located 3 kms. from the dots, with schematic of rock carvings.

SOUTH AMERICAN
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show ten black dots. Originally, it was thought that they might be shadowy depressions or possibly water. However, since the dots have shown up on infrared composite photographs as white, like the mountains, this theory was discarded. Also, photo enlargements have revealed these dark areas to be shadows of large structures, probably stone, measuring 150-200 meters in diameter.

Exactly what they are is not known. The Interamerican Geographic Institute is currently mapping this region. The institute's chief engineer, A.T. Tizandó, said after a careful examination of the entire mountain range: "We have never seen anything like this before." It is, of course, possible that they are a mere chance geological formation. Nonetheless, for the moment, several factors argue against this interpretation.

Firstly, no other similar formation has been found on either side of this particular mountain range, and a close study of other mountain ranges has not produced anything that resembles this feature. Secondly, the probability of five pairs of massive rock formations aligning themselves in this fashion is small. Thirdly, the distance between each pair of dots measured vertically seems to be equal. And finally, the location of the dots within the enclosing horseshoe

The Dots Of Pantiacolla

by Ursula Thiermann

ON December 30, 1975, the sophisticated camera aboard an ERTS satellite, whirling miles above a small section of southeastern Peru at latitude 13° south, snapped photographs on four wavelengths. These photos, along with thousands of others, were beamed to earth and relayed to the giant NASA computer installation in the United States, to be used for a mammoth study of hydrological and agricultural resources. Each photo was numbered, indexed, and filed.

In May 1976, Rodolfo Bragagnini requested copies of several photos of the upper Madre de Dios region of southeastern Peru. He was not, however, looking for water or a better place to grow potatoes. On photograph number C-S11-

This photograph discloses the presence of an unusual formation at the base of the Pantiacolla Mountains. Reproduced on these pages is the photograph (at a scale roughly 150,000:1) taken on wavelength 7 — a band especially suited for topographic analysis. This wavelength cuts through most of the thick jungle vegetation, and thus, gives a clear black outline of rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water. On the other hand, mountains and rock will reflect light and show up white, outlined by darker shadows.

Located somewhat right of center, near the base of the central mountain range shown in this photo, is an amphitheater-shaped outcropping. The area circumscribed by this elliptical formation encompasses some three square kilometers.



aped embankments at either end and a top of a possibly protective plateau seems curious at least.

None of the above observations is incompatible with a naturally occurring geological formation. But taken together, they would seem to indicate that these dots are man-made.

In February 1966, Rodolfo Bragagnini, graduate engineer from the University of Lima, got together with five other amateur archaeologists to found the Institute for the Investigation of Andean Archaeology (INIARA). Last year, after working out the dimensions of the dots from the NASA photograph and considering that they might represent an undiscovered archaeological site, he offered two startling comparisons for consideration. The entire complex comprises an area three times the size of Machu Picchu. Each dot represents an object only marginally smaller than the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt.

Bragagnini has been interested in this specific region of Peru for many years. Born and raised near Cuzco, he knew that the area abounded in Inca ruins, and that the terrain is some of the most impenetrable in the Peruvian jungle. The density of the overgrowth and the abundance of poisonous snakes makes exploration difficult at best. People have been known to walk over ruins without knowing it. In fact, Bragagnini was nearly killed on one of his early expeditions when he almost stepped unaware off a one meter cliff overhanging a river.

Bragagnini had two indications from personal experience that this area of the

upper Madre de Dios might be important archaeologically. The first was hardly substantial. As a boy, Machiguenga Indians told him of a fabulous fortress within a week's journey of his family's ranch. Years later, as his interest in archaeology grew, he realized that there were many such legends of lost cities. Nevertheless, he knew that there were numerous ruins around his home. He explored the area, turning up ancient reservoirs, an Inca road, and other discoveries. He assumed that the Indian story probably had some grain of truth, though likely blown out of proportion. Still, he thought, Machu Picchu was discovered as the result of legend and as late as 1911.

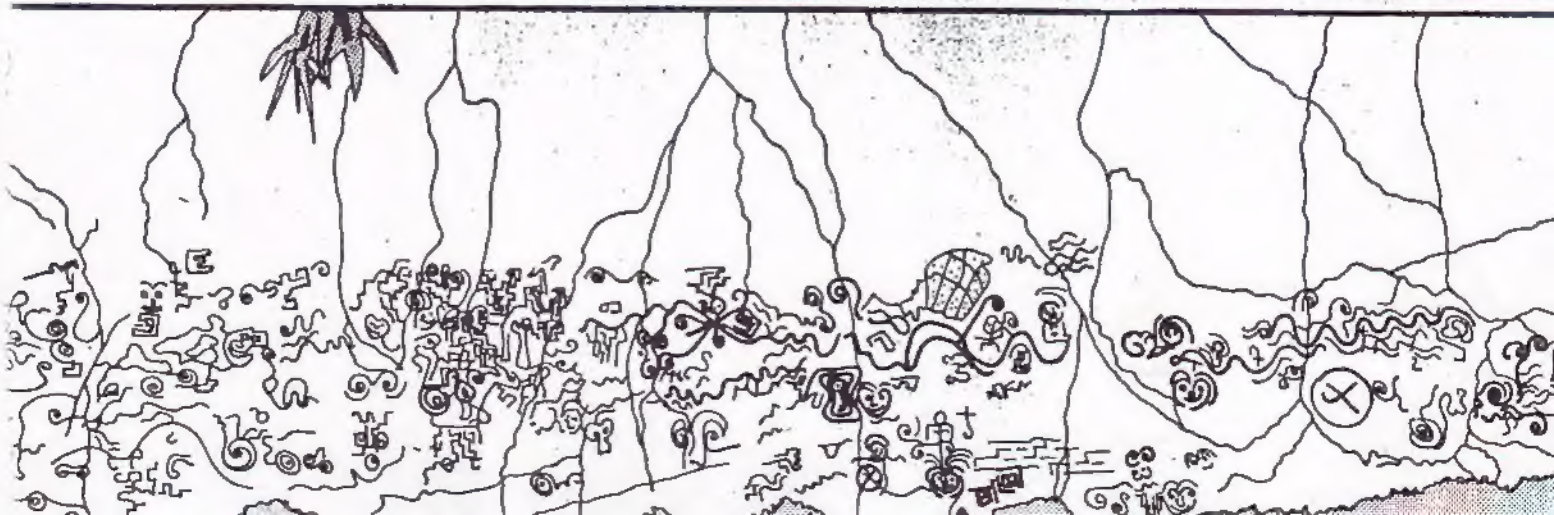
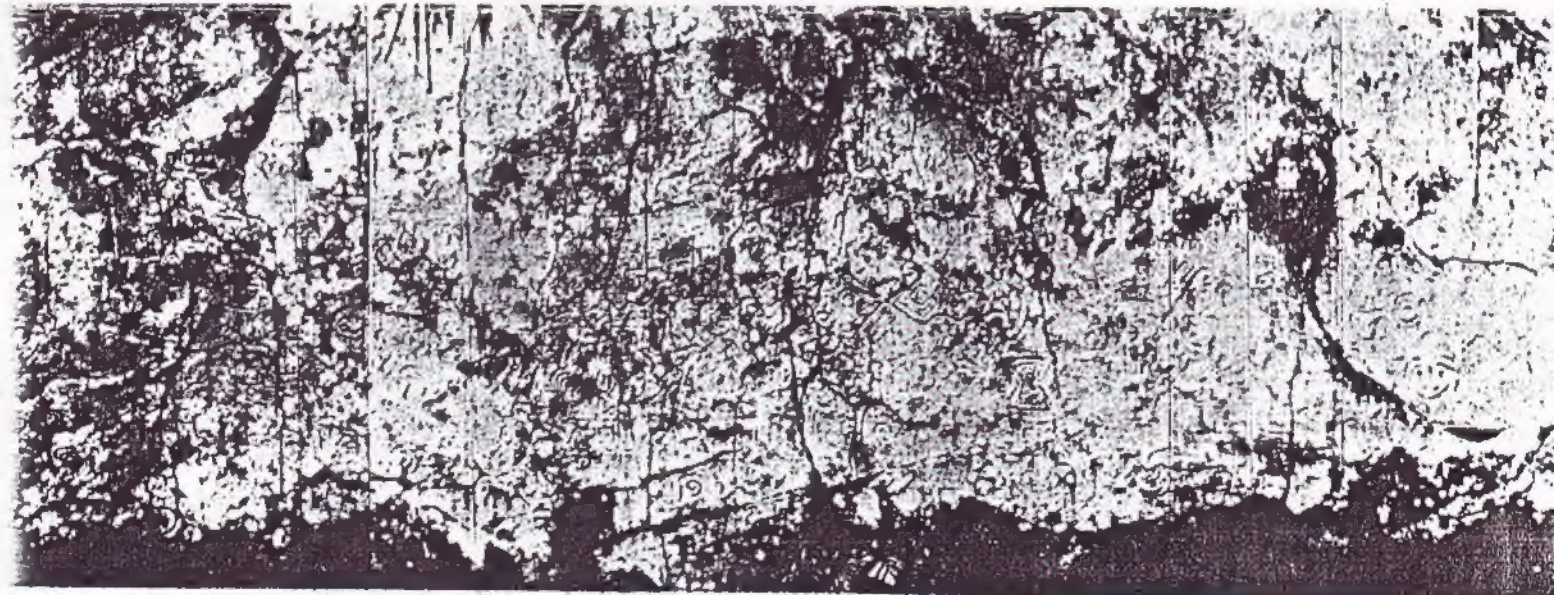
The second clue was more tangible — the discovery of a giant petroglyph (see photo), 4 meters high and 13 meters long. INIARA has confirmed that this petroglyph is within 8 kilometers of the dots. In the photograph, several carved figures can be seen. Faces, animals, and some geometric designs are most obvious. The schematic, drawn at the site, gives a better idea of the complicated markings. The significance and age of the drawings has not been determined.

An explanation of the dots will require on-site inspection. The Machiguenga story of a fabulous fortress alone would be interesting, but not merit an expensive scientific expedition. However, when the legend is given some support by space-age technology, coupled with the nearby discovery of a giant petroglyph, the implication is clear. Expert investigation is called for.



INIARA has made preliminary investigations near the area of the dots and came back with some important ground information. They feel that the time has come for professional archaeologists and geologists to join the search. They have tentatively planned a major expedition into this area during June and July 1978. Experts in the fields are invited to submit their credentials.

In summary, the existence of structures or formations individually the size of the Great Pyramid, collected three times greater than Machu Picchu, merits attention. If they are massive formations, they are unique. If they are as some investigators believe, traces of a lost civilization, they may be one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the century.



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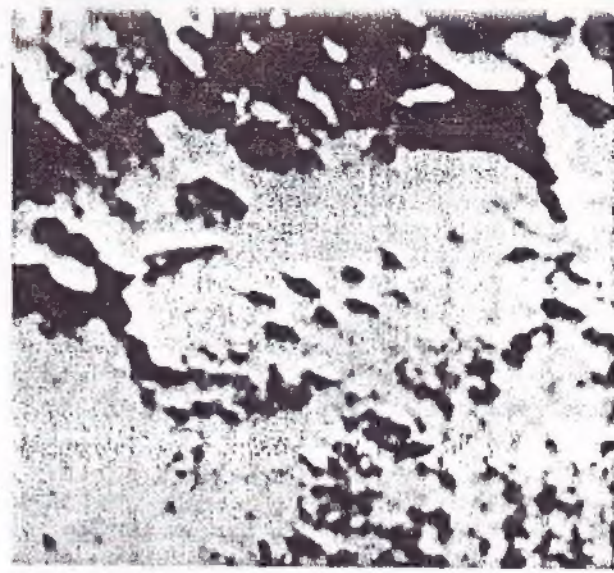
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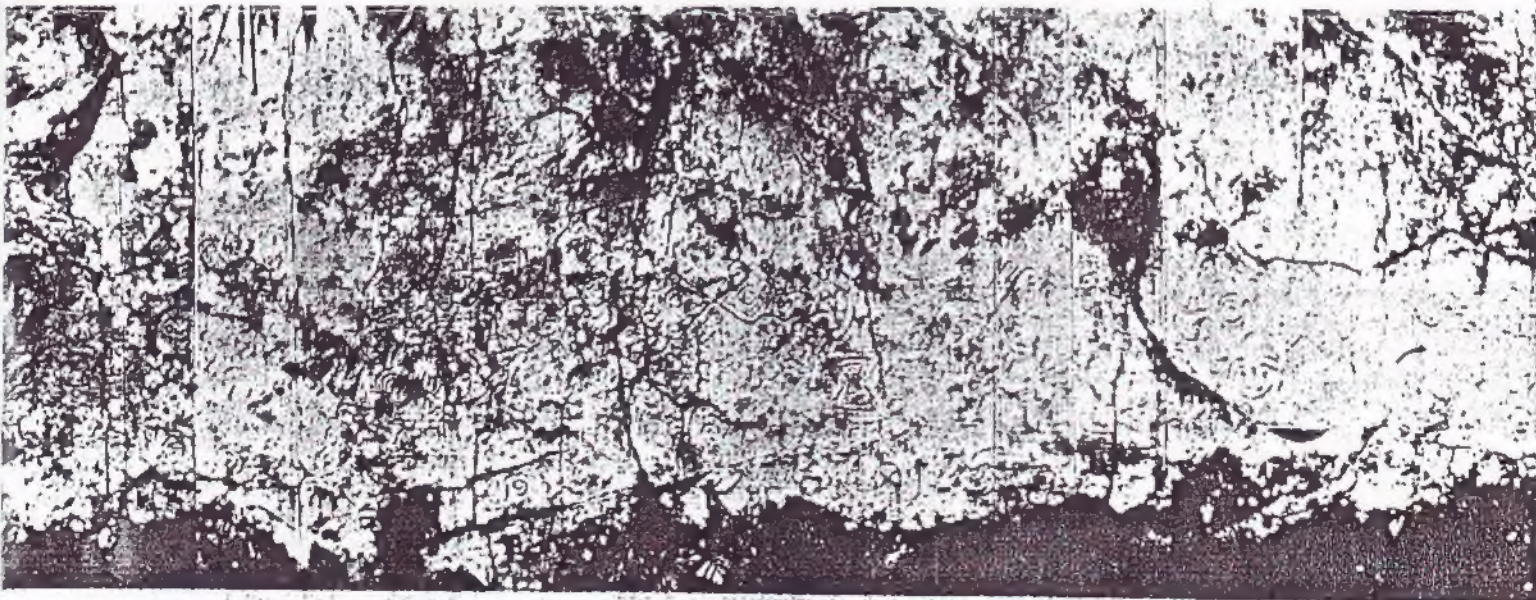
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personas en forma permanente y otras tantas como contratistas.

Ha sido enviada a la Comisaria de Surquillo.

Una expedición partió para explorar ruinas de Pañiti

Cusco, 2 (Corresponsal) — Una expedición internacional peruano-italiana tratará de desentrañar los misterios de la legendaria ciudad pre-colombina del Pañiti y de los restos arqueológicos del Valle de Vilcabamba.

Partió desde el Cusco rumbo a la provincia de La Convención, el grupo

explorador encabezado por el Presidente del Instituto de Investigaciones "Ligabue" de Venecia Dr. Giancarlo Ligabue e integrado por el funcionario del INC Dr. Federico Kauffman Doig y otros arqueólogos nacionales, con la coordinación de la Dirección Regional del Instituto Nacional de Cultura.

Han sido invitados a participar en los trabajos de exploración, el General EP Ludwig Essénwanger, quien hace poco ha efectuado descubrimientos en el Pañiacolla y el médico arquitecto aficionado a la arqueología, Dr. Carlos Neuenchwander, quien varias veces ha efectuado viajes en busca del Pañiacolla.

Los exploradores cuentan con el apoyo de un helicóptero de la Fuerza Aérea Peruana, en el cual se han trasladado a Vilcabamba.

De primera intención se hará el reconocimiento de las ruinas de Choquequirau, Esokitu Pampa y otras en el Valle de Vilcabamba.

Luego este grupo se dirigirá hacia la zona del Llaverio en el límite de la provincia de Paucartambo con el Departamento de Madre de Dios, cerca del río Piñi Piñi.

Hace pocas semanas el General Essénwanger mostró en Lima y luego en Cusco objetos metálicos y de cerámica encontrados en el Llaverio, en una zona que cree fue la capital del antiguo reino del Pañiti.

68 mil transportó Perú el año 1979

El año pasado 1'453,000 pasajeros. Esta cifra da a conocer ayer la Corporación Peruana de Aviación Comercial.

El comercio 3-8-80

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Ubican grupo étnico con hombres de más de 2 metros de estatura

Aislada y sin víveres estuvo 15 días expedición francesa que busca el "Pañiacolla"

Cusco, 17 (Corresponsal). — Miembros de una expedición francesa que va en busca de la ciudadela pre-colombina del Pañiacolla, estuvieron aislados y sin víveres por espacio de cinco días.

Los seis estudiosos franceses guiados por Herbert y Nicole Cartagena, infor-

maron por radio que luego de haber penetrado a la selva por el sector de Paucartambo y recorrido una extensa zona, llegaron a una meseta, desde donde han divisado, maravillados, restos de una al parecer maravillosa ciudadela pre-colombina.

Sin embargo, añadieron en su mensaje radial, que no pueden asegurar aún nada en concreto, ya que la impresión pudiera ser errada a la distancia.

También dijeron haber encontrado un grupo étnico formado por hombres de elevada estatura, que calculan está sobre los 2 metros, aunque han eludido todo contacto con ellos, por medida de seguridad.

Ello ha dado lugar a que se especule sobre la existencia de hombres rubios y gigantes. El informe final al regreso despejará la incógnita.

La expedición francesa "Sobre la pista de los Incas", cuenta con el apoyo de la filial cusqueña del Radio Club Peruano.

Lamentablemente se agotó también la gasolina y el viernes 17 sólo ha habido pequeños contactos, pero al mismo tiempo se envió un helicóptero para ayudar a los expedicionarios.

El problema fue que llegaron a una zona pantanosa, sin posibilidades de regresar por el mismo camino que habían tomado de ida.

La misión persiste, una vez recibidos los abastecimientos, se completará el estudio de la zona para la publicación posterior de un libro.

Instalarán depósitos de combustibles en 3 lugares de M. de Dios

Cusco, 17. (Corresponsal). En un futuro muy próximo, quedará asegurado el abastecimiento de combustibles al Departamento de Madre de Dios, con la instalación de tanques de almacenaje en Laberinto, Puerto Maldonado y Mazurco.

La revelación la hizo el Jefe de la División del Cusco de Petróleos del Perú, ingeniero Manuel Muñoz, quien expresó que la empresa invertirá alrededor de cinco millones en la instalación de los tanques correspondientes.

En Laberinto, habrá almacenamiento para cuatro mil galones de gasolina; en Puerto Maldonado, los tanques a instalarse podrán almacenar 12 mil galones y finalmente en la localidad de Mazurco, el reservorio será para 6 mil galones.

Según el ingeniero Muñoz, el departamento de Madre de Dios podrá tener reservas para 40 a 60 días, con lo que solucionará los graves problemas de escasez de carburantes que se presenta todos los años en la época de lluvias.

Central de Capacitación para el Trabajo tendrá Pisco el año próximo

Pisco, 17. (Corresponsal). La educación en todos

ALLA RICERCA DELLA CIUDAD PERDIDA DI PANTIACOLLA

Perdute tra i folti boschi della selva di Madre de Dios, all'estremità di un sentiero incaico acciottolato che parte da una « laguna nera » dominato da un colle con cinque vette, nei pressi di una seconda laguna quadrata, dovrebbero trovarsi le rovine di Pantiacolla con i loro favolosi tesori aurei. Così dicono antiche leggende cuzqueñe e il racconto di un indio machiguenga. Lo studio di questi resti architettonici potrà contribuire a chiarire gli enigmi circa l'ipotesi riguardante un'antica civiltà amazzonica scomparsa, di cui parla il padre Pio Aza negli anni venti. In ogni caso la scoperta di tale città potrà illustrare le imprese realizzate dagli Inca per civilizzare la foresta alta, con il fine di incorporarla a una delle grandi regioni con cui essi dividevano il loro impero, l'ANTISUYU.

Per giungere alla scoperta della leggendaria Pantiacolla, abbiamo effettuato numerose ricerche ed esplorazioni nella regione dove tale città potrebbe essere situata. Queste sono state realizzate nell'arco di molti anni, sia via terra che dall'alto (aereo, elicottero). L'ultima volta che abbiamo sorvolato i dintorni della regione in questione, fu nel 1980 su invito e in compagnia di due studiosi, Giancarlo Ligabue e Federico Kauffmann Doig, con un elicottero delle Forze Aeree Peruviane, che ci accompagnò in diversi punti, secondo quanto prestabilito.

Nel corso dei nostri diversi viaggi di esplorazione, siamo riusciti ad avvicinarci a quella che potrebbe essere la meseta di Pantiacolla, dove si troverebbero le favolose rovine. La meseta in questione è ubicata tra i fiumi Paucartambo, Alto Madre de Dios e Mani.

A livello di ipotesi di lavoro, ritengo possibile che in tempi remoti sia potuta esistere una civiltà nelle profondità dei folti boschi che coprono la parte orientale delle Ande e si estendono nell'Amazzonia. Come già detto, con questa teoria, seguivamo quanto sostenuto dal



Le piramidi di Pantiacolla viste di profilo. Queste misteriose piramidi, che furono meta e studio di diversi archeologi, vennero, in realtà, riconosciute come formazioni orografiche naturali dalla spedizione « Ligabue » del 1980. La zona di Pantiacolla è ricca di presenze archeologiche e di graffiti rupestri.

padre Pio Aza; insieme a lui, consideravamo anche la possibilità che questa antica civiltà amazzonica scomparsa avesse compiuto incursioni nella regione della sierra andina, seguendo le conche dei grandi affluenti del Rio delle Amazzoni e fondando, forse, solidi e durevoli insediamenti. Si può anche supporre che i discendenti di questi portatori di cultura amazzonica avanzata, già mescolati con gruppi etnici propri della sierra, in epoche posteriori — durante l'impero inca —, siano, a loro volta, penetrati, partendo dalla cordigliera, verso regioni della selva, ricostruendo

parzialmente le rovine che incontravano ai bordi della giungla. Questo complesso di città o una parte d'esse, situate lungo tutta la Cordigliera Orientale e nelle valli dei pendii amazzonici, corrisponderebbe a quello che, dal tempo della Colonia, viene chiamato Regno del Paititi. A questo proposito, le informazioni più complete ci provengono dal religioso francescano fray Julián Bravo de Revello, autore di « Brillante porvenir del Cuzco ». In tale opera, l'autore fa allusione a tutti i racconti che, in un modo o nell'altro, proverebbero l'esistenza reale del Paititi, verso cui si sarebbe

diretta la grande spedizione dell'inca Yupanqui e dove gli spagnoli, nel corso degli ultimi secoli, avrebbero compiuto numerose scorrerie. I nativi del Cuzco, inoltre, sostengono ancor'oggi, sulla base di versioni tramandate oralmente, che il Paititi si trova immerso nello spessore della Selva, e più precisamente, nella menzionata meseta del Pantiacolla. Fu il racconto del capitano Felipe García, quando ero ancora un adolescente (più o meno venti anni fa), a sollevare in me una grande curiosità unita alla speranza di scoprire, un giorno, Pantiacolla. Il capitano García, ancora giovane, era stato posto a dirigere lo sfruttamento del caucciù, per conto di un'impresa di Cuzco. García entrò per la valle di La Convención, attraversò la valle di Lares, Palma Real e poi, proseguendo in canoa, passò per la missione domenicana di Coribeni, giungendo finalmente all'accampamento chiamato Cahuide. Dopo esser passati per Coribeni, ai caucheros si aggiunsero un indio mashco e una machiguenga che, dopo una violenta rissa, diventarono nemici acerrimi, al punto che Huahija, la machiguenga, finì con l'uccidere il mashco. Huahija si diede alla fuga e qui inizia la storia di Celestino, che con Gregorio e un gendarme, furono inviati dal capitano García alla ricerca di Huahija. Dopo due settimane, questi tre incaricati della cattura di Huahija, ritornarono a Cahuide senza aver potuto trovare il fuggiasco, in quanto si erano persi nella selva ed avevano dovuto superare grandi difficoltà per sopravvivere. Fu durante questa azione che, accidentalmente trovarono delle vaste rovine coperte da foresta vergine di cui diedero subito notizia al capitano García. Celestino e Gregorio erano indios machiguenga acculturati e le notizie riferite da loro e dal gendarme coincidevano perfettamente, ragion per cui erano da considerarsi verosimili. Si trattava di un'ulteriore conferma delle voci che già circolavano a Cusco su Pantiacolla, con il vantaggio che quello di Celestino e compagni era un racconto a viva voce che faceva



Foto satellite della NASA (1975) del bacino Madre de Dios, Amazzonia Peruviana, in cui sono visibili, segnalate dalla freccia nera, curiose e incredibili formazioni a piramide disposte in serie parallele. Sono le piramidi di Pantiacolla.

esplicito riferimento a tracce reali in grado di condurre alla leggendaria città. Sul piano pratico, tale racconto suggeriva anzitutto di raggiungere un sentiero acciottolato che iniziava sulle rive di una laguna di colore scuro (« laguna nera »); detto sentiero, nella sua prima parte, avanzava tra i rilievi della cordigliera di Paucartambo fino al colle Toporaque, dove si divideva in diverse diramazioni, una delle quali permetteva di penetrare nella selva alta passando per un colle a cinque « punte » e una cateratta; da qui si giungeva, finalmente, ad una « laguna quadrata » nelle cui vicinanze si sarebbero trovate le favolose rovine. Il capitano García cercò di organizzare una spedizione alle rovine, accompagnato da coloro che conoscevano il cammino; ma l'impresa « cauchera » entrò improvvisamente in crisi e García

non poté mai realizzare questo progetto. All'inizio degli anni '50, decisi di verificare la veridicità del racconto del capitano García e mi posi in cammino per trovare le diverse tracce. Fino allora, due delle tre persone che erano in grado di arrivare alle rovine erano morte, e di Celestino non si sapeva più nulla. L'obiettivo di questa prima spedizione non poté essere raggiunto, malgrado gli sforzi intensi del sottoscritto e delle persone che l'accompagnavano. Riuscimmo solo a giungere fino alla frontiera dei due dipartimenti di Cuzco e Madre de Dios, ai bordi del Piñi Piñi. Tuttavia, da lì proseguii solo, guidato da due indios huachipaire, scendendo il guado di Coñeg, in direzione del fiume Palotoa. Il fiume Palotoa non era più per me quella linea sottile quale appare nelle carte geografiche:

Dots

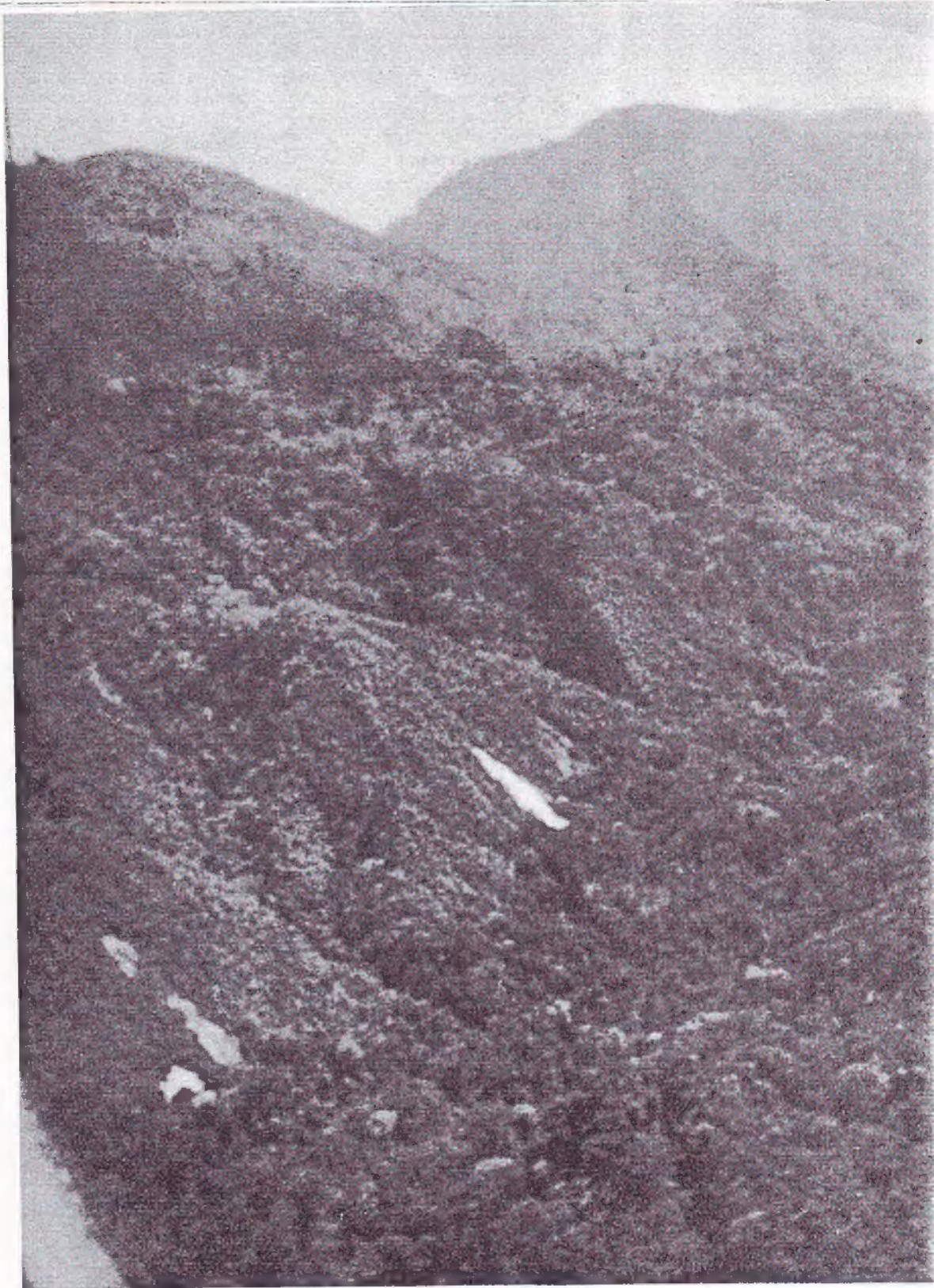
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by

Ursula

Thiermann



The October 1977 and March 1978 issues of the *South American Explorer* featured articles about an unexplained, symmetrical grouping of pyramid formations. These "dots" appeared on a 1975 NASA satellite photograph of the Pantiacolla region, a low jungle area in southeastern Peru.

The publication of these articles and similar accounts in other media set in motion plans for exploratory expeditions to investigate and provide an answer to the question of whether these formations were geological or man-made.

A year and some months has elapsed since the existence of the dots has been known. Nevertheless, no definitive answer can be offered at this time. This must await an on-site inspection, i.e. an expedition to enter the area on foot.

Still, much has happened in the intervening year. In March 1978, Phil Miller, a Ft. Lauderdale, Florida-based entrepreneur, flew over the dots at low level and brought back an intriguing piece of super-eight film showing not ten but twelve symmetrical placed and thinly covered conical hills rising above a level plane. Mystified by this

preliminary aerial glimpse of the dots, Mr. Miller hastened to launch a full-scale expedition into the area before the rainy season. The initial plan called for 24 men to proceed overland from Cuzco to a small tributary of the Alto Madre de Dios River and approach the formations in two Zodiacs. Preparations for this expedition, however, took longer than anticipated, and some expected backing failed to materialize. Nonetheless, a scaled-down version has been rescheduled for sometime in June 1979.

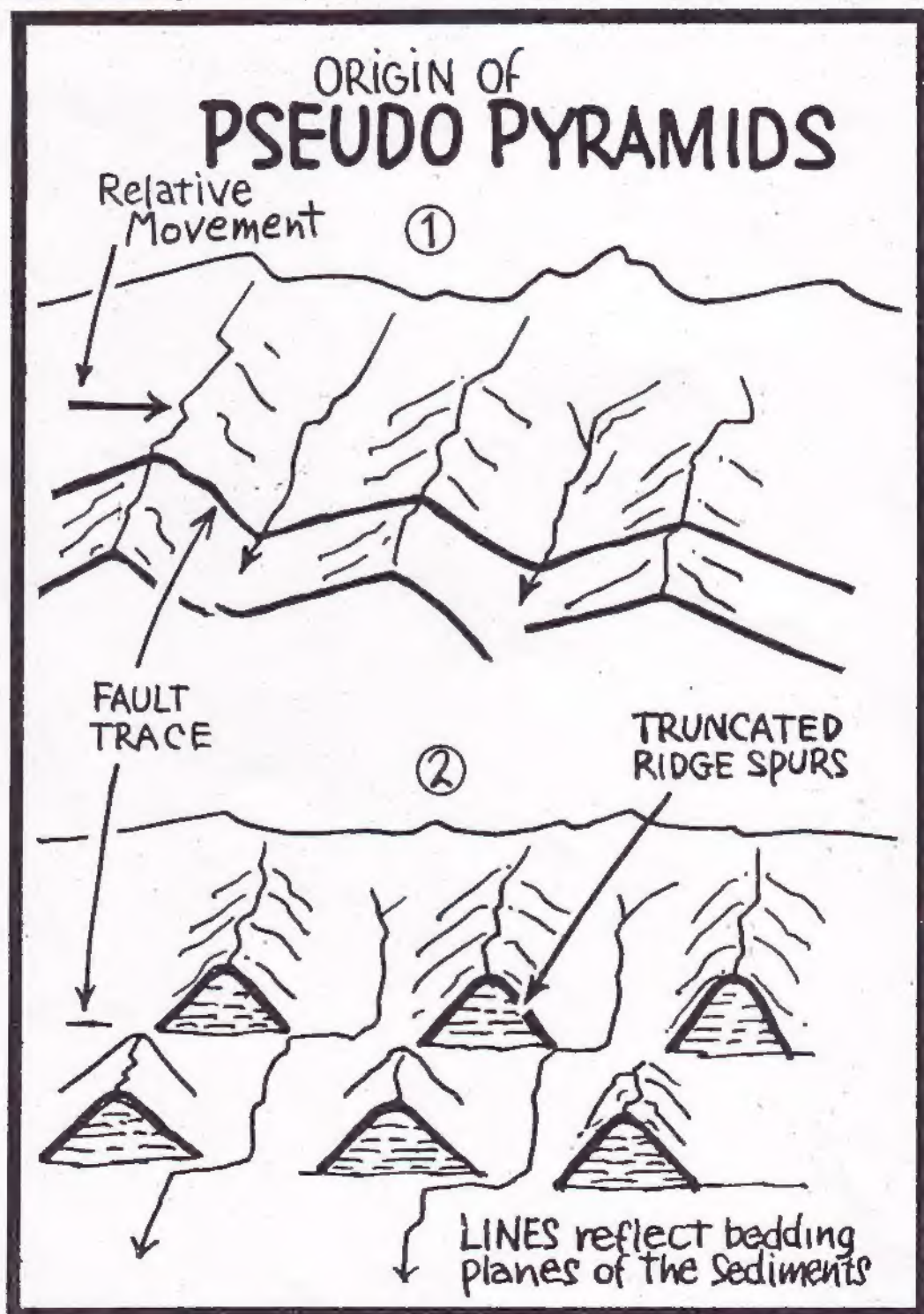
Next, a Peruvian expedition left Cuzco for the dots in August 1978. A 23-man joint effort by the army and interested civilians and scientists, this group reached the petroglyphs which have been visited by previous explorers to the region. The group turned back, however, before reaching the dots by land, their undertaking cut short by

the drowning of a 19-year-old soldier. Members of the Peruvian expedition did manage to fly over the dots in a helicopter, and this, it seems, was enough to convince them that the dots are natural formations.

More recently, there have been reports of a 16-man French team which is planning to enter the zone, but this has not been confirmed.

In fact, the only solid evidence concerning the dots comes from Yoshiharo Sekino, a young Japanese explorer, who tells of having entered the region in December 1977 on his own and on foot. Sekino is convinced that the dots are natural in origin, but states he had too little time in the area to make a thorough investigation. He is presently more interested in a second peculiarity which appears on the same NASA photograph, but which has, up

LEFT: Low aerial view of the "dots" seems to bear out the geological interpretation of the formations. Compare photo with sketch. RIGHT: The pyramids at this angle show a marked resemblance to truncated ridge spurs.





PERUVIAN expedition just before starting out on exploratory investigation of the "dots." This civilian/military operation managed to fly over the formations but did not reach the area by land due to the death of one of its members.

until now, gone unnoticed — two mammoth rectangles which stand out in marked contrast to their surroundings.

Lacking a conclusive ground survey, the most convincing explanation of the dots to date comes from Dr. McKeon, a U.S. geologist working with the Environmental Research Institute of Michigan. Shown slides taken of the dots from the air as well as Miller's film, McKeon believes that either as a result of separation caused by an earthquake or through shifting land masses along a fault, a characteristic dot formation could have emerged (see diagram). The conical configurations could, with time, be the result of vegetation and water erosion as well as additional earth movements.

Dr. McKeon notes that formations such as the 'Devil's Backbone' in Colorado were produced by shifts of trun-

cated ridge spurs together with wind and water erosion resulting in saw-tooth structures resembling the dots.

Undoubtedly the most unusual "visitor" to the dots was Alex Tanous, a "psychic healer, teacher, astral-traveler and researcher on the continuity of life after death." His first out-of-body trip to the dots took place in May at the New York offices of the American Center for Psychic Research. His comment upon arrival was: "They look just like a big bunch of rocks." He then tripped around the surrounding area and reported strong evidence of "previous man."

Still, an in-body expedition to the dots poses no formidable obstacles. The terrain is not unduly hazardous. With proper planning, a small group could make the round trip, Cuzco-dots-Cuzco, in six days or less with time to spare for a reasonably thorough examination. We hope this will happen before the year is out. □

Band I

700 Seiten - 39 DM

Kontinent

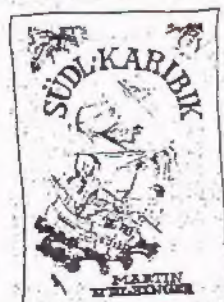
VENEZUELA - GUYANAS
KOLUMBIEN - ECUADOR
PERU - BOLIVIEN
ARGENTINIEN - PARAGUAY - URUGUAY - BRASILIEN - AMAZONAS - GEFIEBET - GALAPAGOS - FEUERLAND

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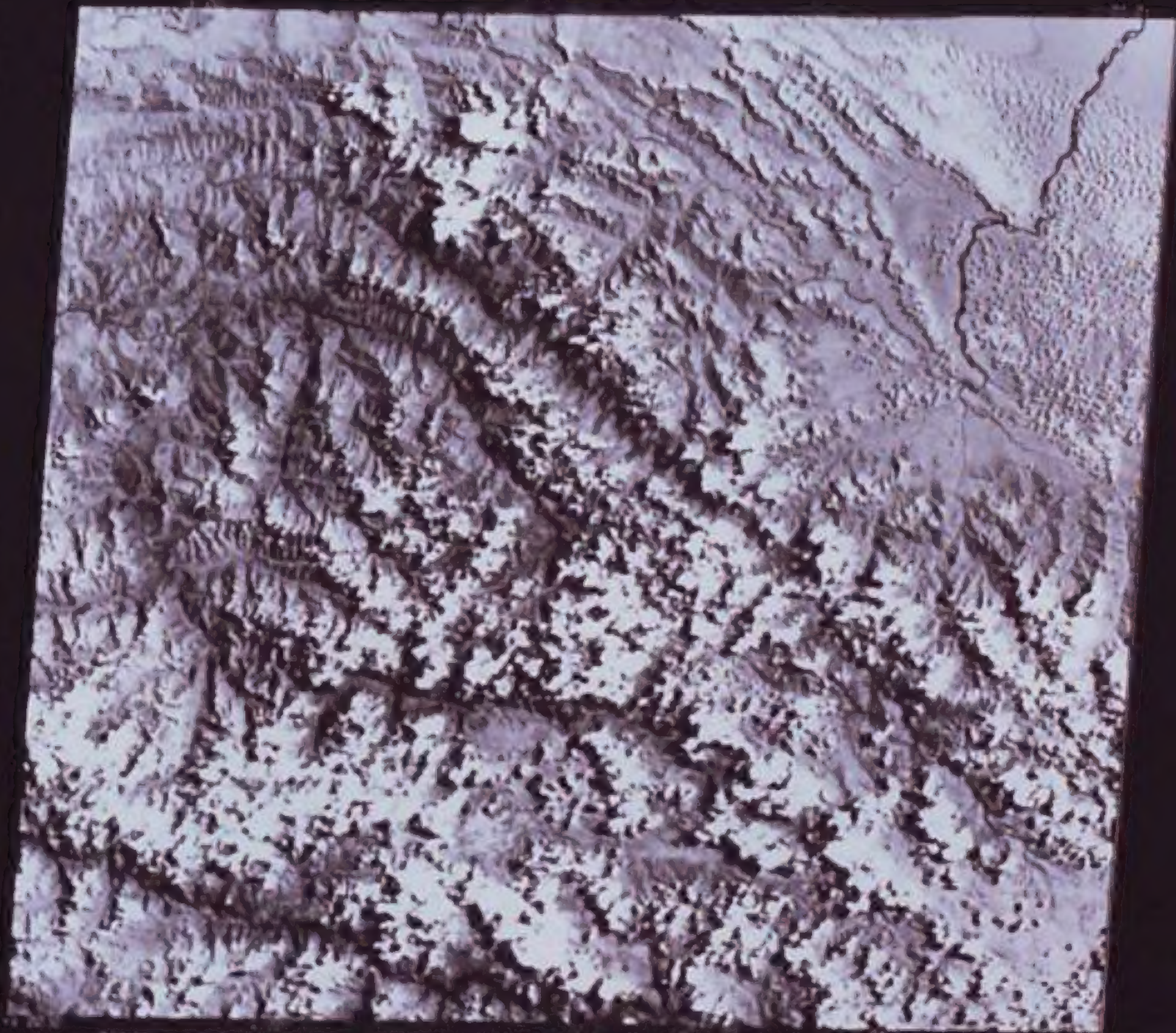
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